

## Message Text

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21/12

ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 BIB-01 SAM-01 CIAE-00 DODE-00 NSAE-00

NSCE-00 SSO-00 USIE-00 INRE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03

NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 OMB-01 SAJ-01 /057 W

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O R 311702Z MAR 76

FM AMEMBASSY MADRID

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 5171

INFO AMEMBASSY LISBON

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 MADRID 2504

C O R R E C T E D C O P Y (ADDING TAG INFOMATION)

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, SOPN, SP, US

SUBJ: RADIO LIBERTY NEGOTIATIONS WITH SPAIN

1. SUMMARY: CHAIRMAN OF BOARD FOR INTERNATIONAL BROADCASTING ABSHIRE, ACCOMPANIED BY ROBERTS, SCOTT, DENNIS AND DCM, HAD THREE NEGOTIATING SESSIONS WITH SPANISH TEAM COMPOSED OF AMBASSADOR ROVIRA, MFA DIRGEN OF NORTH AMERICAN AND FAR EASTERN AFFAIRS JUAN DURAN, MINISTRY OF INFORMATION REPRESENTATIVE YBANEZ AND OTHER MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND MINISTRY OF INFORMATION REPRESENTATIVES MARCH 29, 30 AND 31. THE END RESULTS WERE POSITIVE IN THAT THE SPANISH HAVE NOW DECIDED TO LEAVE THE MATTER OPEN FOR THE TIME BEING. THE TWO TEAM TENTATIVELY AGREED TO MEET AGAIN IN MADRID IN EARLY MAY. MEANWHILE, THEY WILL RESPOND TO QUESTIONS SIMPLY BY SAYING THAT THEY HAVE AGREED TO CONTINUE NEGOTIATIONS. RADIO LIBERTY CONTINUES TO OPERATE, AND THE ISSUE REMAINS OPEN. END SUMMARY.

2. IN THE FIRST SESSION ON MARCH 29 ABSHIRE OPENED AT THE INVITATION OF ROVIRA WITH A THROUGH STATEMENT ON THE NATURE OF THE RADIO LIBERTY OPERATION, THE STRENGTH OF ITS CONGRESSIONAL SUPPORT, ITS CONSONANCE WITH THE HELSINKI CONFIDENTIAL

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DECLARATION, AND THE SIGNIFICANCE AND IMPORTANCE OF ITS MISSION. HE EMPHASIZED THE MUTUAL INTEEST THAT BOTH SPAIN AND THE UNITED STATES SHOULD FEEL IN THE CONTINUED SUCCESS OF RFE/RL AND EXPRESSED APPRECIATION FOR THE COOPERATION

EXTENDED BY SPAIN OVER MANY YEARS. ON THE ASSUMPTION THAT SPAIN WAS INSISTING ON A DEFINITE CLOSE-OUT DATE HE EXPLAINED THE NEED FOR A THREE-YEAR CONTINUATION OF OPERATIONS IN PALS IN ORDER TO ASSURE A BREAK IN EFFECTIVE OPERATIONS. THREE YEARS WERE NEEDED FOR OBTAINING NECESSARY CONGRESSIONAL FUNDING ACTION, THE OBTAINING OF A NEW SITE AND THE MANUFACTURE AND INSTALLATION OF TRANSMITTERS AND ANTENNAES. HE NOTED RFE/RL'S PLANS FOR MODERNIZATION. ABSHIRE FURTHER SAID THAT, RECOGNIZING THE POSSIBILITY OF CHANGED CIRCUMSTANCES IN A YEAR'S TIME, HE WOULD LIKE TO HAVE AN "AFFIRMATIVE CLAUSE" IN THE UNDERSTANDING TO BE REACHED THAT WOULD PROVIDE FOR POSSIBLE FURTHER DISCUSSIONS IN A YEAR'S TIME IF MUTUALLY AGREED.

3. ROVIRA RESPONDED BY ASKING A SERIES OF DETAILED QUESTIONS, APPARENTLY FOR BACKGROUND. THESE INCLUDED THE QUESTION WHETHER THE BIB HAD NOT EXPECTED A PROBLEM WITH REGARD TO THE CONTINUATION OF OPERATIONS IN PALS. ABSHIRE RESPONDED THAT, FRANKLY, IT HAD NOT. EVEN THOUGH A NOTE REGARDING CLOSURE HAD BEEN RECEIVED FROM THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION IN SEPTEMBER OF 1975, THE FOREIGN MINISTRY HAD ON MORE THAN ONE OCCASION SAID THAT THE ISSUE WAS NOT A CLOSED ONE. IN FACT IT HAD SAID THE GOS PREFERRED NOT TO NEGOTIATE ON THIS SUBJECT UNTIL AFTER THE SIGNING OF THE BASES AGREEMENT. AT THIS POINT, ONE OF THE FOREIGN MINISTRY REPRESENTATIVES SAID THAT THE REFERENCE HAD BEEN TO RATIFICATION, NOT SIGNING OF THE BASES AGREEMENT.

4. AS ROVIRA ASKED QUESTIONS OF DETAIL, DURAN, AND TO SOME EXTENT YBANEZ, FROM TIME TO TIME ATTEMPTED TO FOCUS THE CONVERSATION ON THE CENTRAL QUESTION OF WHEN AND HOW THE PALS OPERATION WOULD BE PHASED OUT. IN THE PROCESS, THEY PRESENTED ARGUMENTS AGAINST THE CONTINUATION OF THE PALS OPERATION, WHICH INCLUDED THE ALLEGATION THAT SPAIN WAS NOT RECEIVING ENOUGH FOR ITS CONTRIBUTION TO THE WESTERN CAUSE, THAT SPAIN WAS CONCERNED THAT INTERNATIONAL RADIO OPERATIONS NOT INTERFERE IN THE INTERNAL AFFAIRS OF NATIONS IN VIEW OF CONFIDENTIAL

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ITS OWN EXPERIENCE WITH RADIO INDEPENDENCE IN ROMANIA AND WITH ALGERIAN RADIO EMISSIONS, THAT THE UNITED STATES SEEMED TO HAVE RELIED ON DICTATORSHIPS MORE THAN ITS DEMOCRATIC FRIENDS FOR COOPERATION IN SUCH PROJECTS, AND THAT SPANISH PUBLIC OPINION, WHICH WAS MORE ASSERTIVE NOW THAN IN THE PAST, WOULD NOT ACCEPT PROLONGED CONTINUATION OF THE PALS OPERATION.

5. DURAN SAID THAT THE PERIOD FOR CONTINUED OPERATIONS BEING SOUGHT BY THE US TEAM WAS TOO LONG AND THAT THE AFFIRMATIVE CLAUSE THAT HAD BEEN PROPOSED COULD CREATE A PROBLEM. ON THE LATTER POINT, HOWEVER, ROVIRA THOUGHT THAT ABSHIRE AND HIS COLLEAGUES MIGHT BE FREE TO SAY, FOR THEIR OWN PUR-

POSES, THAT THERE MIGHT BE FURTHER DISCUSSIONS IN A YEAR'S TIME SHOULD CIRCUMSTANCES WARRANT AND THERE BE MUTUAL AGREEMENT. IT MIGHT DO THIS EVEN THOUGH SPAIN WOULD NOT. DURAN CONTINUED TO PRESS FOR EXPLICIT DISCUSSIONS OF THE CLOSE-OUT DATE; BUT ROVIRA DEMURRED, SAYING THAT THIS WAS AN IMPORTANT MATTER AND MORE TIME SHOULD BE TAKEN TO CONSIDER IT. THE FIRST DAY'S MEETING ADJOURNED ON THIS NOTE.

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## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** X  
**Capture Date:** 15 SEP 1999  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** POLICIES, MEETINGS, MEETING REPORTS, RADIO BROADCASTING, NEGOTIATIONS, MEETING PROCEEDINGS  
**Control Number:** n/a  
**Copy:** SINGLE  
**Draft Date:** 31 MAR 1976  
**Decaption Date:** 01 JAN 1960  
**Decaption Note:**  
**Disposition Action:** RELEASED  
**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Authority:** saccheem  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 28 MAY 2004  
**Disposition Event:**  
**Disposition History:** n/a  
**Disposition Reason:**  
**Disposition Remarks:**  
**Document Number:** 1976MADRID02504  
**Document Source:** ADS  
**Document Unique ID:** 00  
**Drafter:** n/a  
**Enclosure:** D G ALTERED  
**Executive Order:** 11652 GDS  
**Errors:** n/a  
**Film Number:** D760122-0625, D760144-1055  
**From:** MADRID  
**Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Image Path:**  
**ISecure:** 1  
**Legacy Key:** link1976/newtext/t197603116/baaaesqa.tel  
**Line Count:** 118  
**Locator:** TEXT ON-LINE, TEXT ON MICROFILM  
**Office:** ACTION EUR  
**Original Classification:** CONFIDENTIAL  
**Original Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Original Previous Classification:** n/a  
**Original Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Page Count:** 3  
**Previous Channel Indicators:**  
**Previous Classification:** CONFIDENTIAL  
**Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Reference:** n/a  
**Review Action:** RELEASED, APPROVED  
**Review Authority:** saccheem  
**Review Comment:** n/a  
**Review Content Flags:** ANOMALY  
**Review Date:** 16 APR 2004  
**Review Event:**  
**Review Exemptions:** n/a  
**Review History:** RELEASED <16 APR 2004 by CollinP0>; APPROVED <31 AUG 2004 by saccheem>  
**Review Markings:**

Margaret P. Grafeld  
Declassified/Released  
US Department of State  
EO Systematic Review  
04 MAY 2006

**Review Media Identifier:**  
**Review Referrals:** n/a  
**Review Release Date:** n/a  
**Review Release Event:** n/a  
**Review Transfer Date:**  
**Review Withdrawn Fields:** n/a  
**Secure:** OPEN  
**Status:** NATIVE  
**Subject:** RADIO LIBERTY BROADCASTING OPRTATIONS POLICIES MEETING REPORTS  
**TAGS:** PFOR, SOPN, US, SP, BIB, RADIO LIBERTY, RL, (ABSHIRE), (ROBERTS), (SCOTT), (ROVIRA), (DURAN, JUAN), (YBANEZ)  
**To:** STATE INFO LISBON  
**Type:** TE  
**Markings:** Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006